

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine and an Exchange With Reporters in Ankara, Turkey**

*July 8, 2026*

*President Trump.* Well, thank you very much. It's a great honor to be with President Zelenskyy. We've talked a little while, and we speak on occasion by phone. We had a great talk the other day, I think. Very positive. And I think we have some very good stories to tell, what's going on.

And he wants to see a settlement, and I think President Putin wants to see a settlement. And usually, that means a settlement, but who knows? This is a tough one.

But I just—you know, we just had our NATO meeting, and it was a great meeting. You probably heard. It was a great meeting. There's a lot of—there was a lot of love in that room, a lot of unity. And I don't think it could have been—Marco, what do you think? It couldn't have gone much better. You have a feeling as to what you just saw?

*U.S. Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio.* Very positive. A lot of unity, strength in there.

*President Trump.* Yes, really good. Scott, what'd you think?

*U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent.* Yes, sir. All the Europeans—they attributed you to saving NATO, and they're—they all—they want to do what they're supposed to do and do the right thing.

*President Trump.* Yes. That was a—it was something very special.

And I will say that what they've done with Turkey—and President Erdoğan has been a friend of mine. He's been a friend of mine for a long time. Strong man. Good man. And he's done a fantastic job. Every road is so—everything's perfect. He's a—from the airport to the destination, everything's been perfect.

So we had a really good meeting. And we thought this would be a good time for President Zelenskyy and I to meet, and we'll see what we can do. But we've actually developed a good relationship. It's hard to believe, right? From the Oval Office to now, we've developed—*[laughter]*—I think we've developed a very good relationship. And——

*President Zelenskyy.* And this is not the end.

*President Trump.* No, this is not. This is going to be the beginning, maybe.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Just the beginning.

And you know, the country has a lot of future. It has such great land, such great assets, such great people. And you have a lot of people.

I was with a group in Poland, and they have—you have a lot of people in Poland and—which is a terrific country with a really great President. I happened to endorse him. *[Inaudible]* And he's doing a very good job.

And they were saying they love Poland, but they really want to go back, you know? You're going to get a lot of people back when this is over. They left, some, and they're all—I think they're going to come back. A big percentage are going to come back.

So we're going to have a good talk, and we're going to see how it all goes.

And, Mr. President, would you like to say something?

*President Zelenskyy.* Thanks so much, Mr. President. Thank you very much for this meeting. And we are very thankful, as always, to your support, American support—bipartisan support.

Thanks for the invitation to this summit. And I think that we really—I agree with you. We have a lot—what to discuss, to speak about.

And of course, we are thankful for the PURL program, and we want to share with you some details what we want to raise during our meeting. Air defense is the priority. The second point—or maybe the first: about negotiations.

*President Trump.* Right.

*President Zelenskyy.* I think, yes, we understand what to do—is our estimation—what to do, how to bring peace. And I hope that we will do. I'm sure that you will do everything to solve this war. Yes.

And I'm very happy that our sides began to work on drone deal, and it's very good beginning. And I hope that today I will have possibility to—also to discuss with you some very important details.

Thank you so much.

*President Trump.* Well, we've settled a lot of wars. And this one is the one that I thought maybe would be the easiest, but Putin's a difficult character, and this guy's a difficult character. Doesn't—it's not the easiest—not the easiest thing. And there's a lot of commitment, and there's a lot of love of the countries and everything else. But I think we've made a lot of progress in the last couple of weeks, and we'll see how it all goes.

So do you have any questions?

*[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]*

### *Memorandum of Understanding on the Cessation of Hostilities Between U.S. and Iran*

*Q.* With the Iran—with the Iran cease-fire possibly over, are you—can we expect the resumption of full-scale hostilities?

*President Trump.* Well, I just think they are behaving very badly, as they have for 47 years. And you know, we hit them hard last night after they launched a couple of—

*[President Trump addressed President Zelenskyy.]*

You don't have to know about this. You've got enough on your mind. *[Laughter]*

But they launched a couple of drones and one rocket—one missile and—at ships because they were in the Strait, which they have every right to be. And so we hit them very hard last night. Very, very hard. Probably hit them hard again tonight. I'll give him a little warning. We're going to hit them hard tonight. But we'll see how it all works out.

No, I'm not happy with them. You know, it's like—for instance, we'll have a meeting, and we'll talk about the denuclearization of Iran—because that's what the war is. It's not a war. It's really the denuclearization of Iran.

And we'll have a meeting, and we'll talk about just that. That's—because my whole thing is not about regime change, it's not about—although, I think it's regime change when you knock out the first group, the second group, and now you're at the—I think that's maybe the ultimate regime change, but that's not what it's about.

It's about, we don't want them to have nuclear weapons, and it's denuking or denuclearization. And I think we've made a lot of progress.

And they'll get out of the room, we'll talk about—like we're here. They'll agree on everything, and then they'll go have a news conference and say we never even talked about it. They're cuckoo. There's something wrong with these people.

And for 47 years, they've been the bully of the Middle East. And they're not the bully anymore. They're not the bully anymore. And all we want—I want—it's very simple: They can't have a nuclear weapon. That's what I'm there for.

Because if they did——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

——because if they did, they'd use it. And we're not going to let that happen.

*Q.* President Trump, sir.

*President Trump.* Daniel [Daniel Baldwin, One America News Network].

### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* You've made a career making deals in very challenging situations. Speaking to President Zelenskyy, speaking to President Putin, in your view, sir, what is the most pragmatic pathway forward to finding a long-term peace deal in the Russia-Ukraine war?

*President Trump.* I just think they're going to make a deal, look, it's been—this deal has been in the works for a long time. It's got the pluses, the minuses. They know what it is. He knows what it is better than anybody.

And I just think it's—sometimes—you know, I used an analogy. And it sounds simple, but it's sort of true: You're—you have two kids in a park, and they don't like each other, and they start fighting. Sometimes, you have to let them fight. Let them see that it's tough. You know, it's tough. Fighting is tough.

And he's done an amazing job. Look, he's been very effective. And he's had the best equipment because he's had our equipment. And he's had great—but somebody has to use that equipment, and you have a lot of brave people that are using that equipment.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* And Russia, you know, it's a big country, but it's a big force. Russia's always been a big fighting force. So, you know, it's—but I really believe it's ready.

It's very interesting, because you'd almost say it's worse than ever, and maybe it isn't. Sometimes with war—and you study war—and I've studied it so long; for years, long before I did this—sometimes it's when it gets the worst—and I don't know that it's the worst right now. It's consistently bad. They lost—25,000 people were lost—kids, young people last month. And we had a month—35, 2 months ago. And I would say more Russians, and—but it's just—they're people. They're people.

And there's actually very little difference between the people. I mean, you know, it's like the Russians and Ukrainian people. And they can get along.

But it's a—it's a nasty war. Thousands and thousands—mostly soldiers are being killed. The battlefields—I see pictures, and it's horrible. He thinks it's horrible. They all—we all think it's horrible.

And the President wants to get it done, and I believe that President Putin wants to get it done, and that should be a good combination.

Thank you.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, what is your assessment on Ukraine's strike on Russian oil refineries and military factories?

*President Trump.* Where are you from?

*Q.* Ukraine.

*President Trump.* Phrase the question differently, please.

*Q.* Ukraine deliver long strikes on Russian military factories and on oil refineries, and they ran out of gas.

*President Trump.* Marco, why don't you answer that——

*Secretary Rubio.* Well——

*President Trump.* ——because you're right in the middle of it.

*Secretary Rubio.* Yes. No, I think what you're discussing is the ability of Ukraine to reach deep inside of Russia——

*Q.* Yes, yes. Sure. Sure.

*Secretary Rubio.* ——and conduct strikes.

I think that's one of the dynamics that's changed in this war over the last few months, and that is that the Russians are finding it more difficult to defend their own airspace. And what we hope that means is that's going to create the space now for—to negotiate the end of this war.

*President Trump.* It's an escalation, but it's also an escalation that can help lead to an end. And——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Reconstruction Efforts in Ukraine*

*Q.* Mr. President, what makes you thinking that Mr. Putin might be seeking for the settlement?

*President Trump.* So where are you from?

*Q.* Radio Free Europe's Ukrainian Service. I'm from Ukraine.

*President Trump.* Okay, good. Because I talk to him. I talk to him. I talk to President Zelenskyy. And I think—that's all I've done. My whole life, I've made deals. That's—I guess becoming President was making a deal. Right? It was, like, a lot of little individual things. In the end, it's making a deal. And that's what I do, and I do it well, and I know when people want to make a deal. I think he wants to make a deal.

And I do feel that President Zelenskyy would like to get back to rebuilding his country, as opposed to——

*President Zelenskyy.* Of course.

*President Trump.* ——you know, having all of this death and destruction.

Ukraine has tremendous potential. He understands that. We talk about that. He talks about that more than he talks about the war. You know, to me, I think it's—I think you might be—find that more exciting than the war.

This is—it's brutal. The other's the beauty of it, you know? He's—I think he'll build a great country. I think he's going to build it. We have a little stake in that country now, because we have some land in that country. But we have minerals. It's among the wealthiest—it's among the best land anywhere in the world for rare earth, and we have some——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

We have some—we have some rare earth. I look forward to taking advantage of it at the right time, I will say.

*Q.* Are you going to ask Europe to make Patriot missiles in Europe?

*President Trump.* Here's—look at this guy. He's one of my favorite soldiers. I see him. He's central casting. You—right? You doing okay?

*Deputy Head of the Presidential Office Brigadier General Pavlo Palisa of Ukraine.* Yes, sir.

*President Trump.* We see him at meetings. He's good. He's done a great job. Great job.

*Brig. Gen. Palisa.* We're trying to do our best, sir.

*President Trump.* Yes. Great—great hero, actually.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Go ahead, please.

#### *U.S. Patriot Missiles/Defense Sales and Manufacturing/Venezuela*

*Q.* Mr. President, will you allow Europe to make Patriot interceptors in Europe? Are you comfortable with licensing that technology?

*President Trump.* About what? Tell me.

*Q.* Patriot interceptors—to be made in Europe.

*President Trump.* And you're talking with respect to Ukraine.

Well, we're going to talk about that. You know, look, it's a defensive weapon, which I like better than an offensive weapon. It's the best.

So I was saying, we have an aircraft carrier, which is one of the most beautiful in the world. It's one of the biggest—the *Abraham Lincoln*. And 2 months ago, we had a hundred—I told this story yesterday. We had 111 missiles shot by the Islamic Republic of Iran [Iran; White House correction]. They were shot at the aircraft carrier over a period of about 1 hour. A hundred and eleven missiles going to a very expensive ship, and every one of those missiles was knocked down pretty much—most by Patriots, but by other means also, as you know.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Other less expensive means. It's even better when you do that.

But out of the 111 missiles, every one of them was shot down. It didn't hit the ship. And, you know, bad things happen—right?—when that happens. So think of that. Over a period of 1 hour, these missiles are coming at you, and every one of them shot down.

So I think one of the things we're going to be talking about is—as you know, we—the companies—we have great power over the companies—those companies that make the Patriot

and make all of the great stuff, the Tomahawks—all of the great stuff. We have the best stuff. Many things. The Patriot's great, but we have many, many great things.

You see that with Venezuela. You see it with Iran. Look, Iran has been wiped out. Iran—their navy's gone. Their air force is gone. Everything is gone.

But one of the things I think we're going to be talking about today—just, a little birdie told me this—about the fact that we'll give them the right to make Patriots. We'll show them how to do it. It's very complex, actually, but it's—you'll figure out the complexity quickly. And we're talking about that.

And we'll—the company that makes them, which is building, now, four plants—you know, all of our companies will be able to do this in 2 to 3 months. Every—if you order a Patriot, now you have to wait a long time for them. Same thing with Tomahawks. We have a lot of certain equipment, but with—they call it the elite equipment, and you don't need elite equipment, necessarily, for a war.

But—so one of the things we're going to be talking about is, you'll—we're going to give a license to you to make Patriots. That's pretty cool, right?

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes, this is—yes. Very.

*President Trump.* This way, he can't complain that we're not giving them enough. I'd say, "Make them yourself."

We haven't informed the company of that yet, but that will work out all right. *[Laughter]* You know, they're—I'm sure they'll be thrilled. But you know, they'll be able to do it. You'll be able to figure that out. Most countries couldn't do that.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* If I said that to most countries, they wouldn't know what I'm talking about, but this is a very ingenious group.

And what I like about that: It's a defensive situation, as opposed to an offensive. But I think one of the things you might want to be talking about is that. That's what I heard. Little birdie told me that. *[Laughter]*

Go ahead.

#### *Memorandum of Understanding on the Cessation of Hostilities Between U.S. and Iran*

*Q.* Mr. President, on Iran. Can you clarify: Does the end of the cease-fire mean that we are back to a full-scale——

*President Trump.* Well, as far as I'm concerned——

*Q.* ——military conflict?

*President Trump.* Look, they violate the agreement every day. They lie. They cheat. They kill people. They've been killing people for 47 years. They knocked out the *SS Cole*. We lost—what?—a hundred—200 people. More. That was a long time ago.

For 47 years, no President did anything about them. Well, Obama actually gave them vast amounts of money.

*[President Trump gestured to President Zelenskyy.]*

You'd like this.

He gave them a planeload of money: \$1.7 billion in green cash. They load up a Boeing—they loaded up a Boeing 757. Remember? The old 757—it was a beautiful plane, loaded up with cash. They took all the seats out, and they took all of the cash from Virginia, Maryland, and DC banks. They had no money. They took every ounce of cash, put it in, flew it to Iran, and gave them the money.

I wonder what these guys thought of when the door opened and cash fell out of this big plane, beautiful plane. And then, on top of that, they gave them billions and billions of dollars.

And by the way, they gave it to the wrong—the wrong country, frankly, you want to know the truth. And it began—that was—that was pretty much the Obama nuclear deal—Obama deal, the—that was one of the worst tragedies that happened. That's what happened in the Middle East. That deal set back that whole situation. They went with—frankly, they picked the wrong country. They picked the wrong country.

JCPOC. What a terrible—what a terrible deal. I call it the "Obama Nuclear Waste Deal," because what he did with that deal is, he caused tremendous hardship in the Middle East. It was a terrible, terrible thing to do.

And we've been just the opposite. Our deal is a wall to a nuclear weapon. His deal was a road to a nuclear weapon. We couldn't—they'll never build a nuclear weapon under our deal.

But I don't know if we're going to have a deal. We may just do it without a deal. Because you know what? It's easier, because these people——

#### *Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development*

*Q.* What does that look like, specifically?

*President Trump.* ——they lie and they cheat. And you have an agreement, and they'll go outside—for instance, they agreed: "Well, we'll never have a nuclear weapon." They agreed. Then they go outside, they have a news conference, or they leak that we never discussed the subject.

Now, who would believe we never discussed the subject? Because for me, that's 99.9 percent of what we're doing. It's denuclearization of Iran. Okay?

So, when you ask—our guys can continue. You know, Steve is great, and Jared and all the guys. They know him very well. Actually, they're working on your stuff too. [*Laughter*]

I wonder which—I picked two beauties. You know what? We settled eight wars. I've got a couple of beauties here. But Steve's great and Jared is great. You know, they're the right guys, and we'll see what happens.

But I will say this: Iran—they've misbehaved for 47 years. They've killed our soldiers, they've killed our people, and they've killed a lot of people all over the Middle East and elsewhere.

And the roadside bomb was their preferred—you know, the preferred weapon was—by Soleimani—the roadside bomb, where it would explode under a truck. We actually built trucks with floors, steel this thick, and then all they did was they made bigger bombs.

And we have young guys around—not walking around, because they have no legs—but their legs were blown off, their arms were blown off, their face was blown off. And they lived. Because of modern medicine, you can do anything. But they're living—they're living, like, in hell. Their whole life changed because of Iran. And that was—96 percent of the people that use that—they were made in Iran. And so we have a score to settle too.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

*President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine Conflict*

*Q.* Mr. President, you say that President Putin is ready to finish this war. What if he doesn't? Do you—are you ready to put pressure on Russia? Are you ready to——

*President Trump.* Well, we have a lot of pressure.

*Q.* ——put more sanctions?

*President Trump.* We have a lot of pressure on President Putin. You know, I don't think he likes what's going on. I don't think he likes—I don't think he's thrilled with what's happening. There's a lot of pressure on President Putin to get it done. I think there's pressure on everybody to get that one done. A lot of pressure.

*Q.* What's your security guarantee for Ukraine?

*President Trump.* The guarantee?

*Q.* Yes, security guarantee for Ukraine.

*President Trump.* Well, the security guarantee, you're talking about?

*Q.* Yes.

*President Trump.* I mean, it—not that we want to do it. We'll do it to save lives.

Look, Ukraine's very far away. We have an ocean separating us. What I'm doing is, I'm trying to save lives. A lot of lives are being lost.

I also think that it's a country with great potential. I think if this kind of brainpower can go toward build—rebuilding the country instead of fighting a war, I think it's going to do—I think that country is going to do fantastically well.

And likewise, Russia—you know, look, they're devoting a lot of energy. A lot of energy.

Do you have a question for President Putin, please?

*Q.* Putin?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* President——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

President—do you have a question for President Putin?

*Q.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Not Zelenskyy. Putin. *[Laughter]*

Yes, what would you like to ask him? Because I'm going to ask him that question.

*Q.* I have question. You once—last year, you called Russia "a paper tiger," referring that they're not doing—*[inaudible]*——

*President Trump.* Who did I call?

*Q.* I'm from Telegraf UA, Ukrainian media.

*President Trump.* No, no. Give us a question not for Zelenskyy. Give us a question for Putin.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Ukraine/Russia*



*Q.* Why is he attacking Ukraine cities if he wants peace?

*President Trump.* Because I'm speaking to him today.

*Q.* Why is he attacking Ukraine cities if he wants peace?

*President Trump.* And give me a good, hard question.

*Q.* When will he end this war? That is the question.

*President Trump.* That's a good question. I don't think I've ever asked him that question. I'm going to ask him that question.

*Q.* Please do.

*Q.* Mr. President, what's that status of a drone deal between the U.S. and Ukraine?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* Say it.

*Q.* What's the status——

*President Trump.* By the way, I will tell you, though, he's going to tell you that he wants it ended as soon as he can end it. He wants it ended——

*Q.* Do you believe that?

*President Trump.* He wants to end it soon. And I ask him, and we talk. I talk to him a lot.

*[President Trump gestured to President Zelenskyy.]*

I talk to him a little bit less, but the relationship is very good. But I talk to President Putin a lot. He—and he wants to end the war. And a lot——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

A lot of people don't believe that. I'm telling you.

#### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* What are President Putin's conditions for ending the war? Do you know what he wants?

*President Trump.* Well, I—they were certain conditions that were a little bit different. I think they're changing. I think they're probably getting a little bit better toward some of the things that you'd like.

It's been tough on Russia. It's been a lot tougher than it was supposed to be. I mean, in all fairness, this was supposed to be a—this is a war that would have never happened if I were President. Would have never happened. You'd have a full country. You know, I mean, just a shame that it happened.

But no, this is a—this is something that I think Zelenskyy wants to do and Putin wants to do. They want to—they want to get it done.

Ask the President that question. Ask him.

*[A reporter spoke in Ukrainian; the translation provided to President Trump was inaudible.]*

*President Trump.* Go ahead.

*President Zelenskyy.* No, I don't know what—I don't know what conditions Putin now wants for this peace. So I think that they are changing in a way, because at the very beginning of full-scale war, he was stronger. And now I think he is losing initiative on the battlefield—I think his

army. But that's why I think that—because of technologies, because it's not the question now of number of people. People are—our heroic people are very important, but now it's not the question of only number of people. First of all, people and technologies. People with technologies.

Now, I think that we have better steps, technological steps, further than Russia—maybe quicker, because they also—they—you know that they produce a lot of different things, which are tough, strong against us, but we are quicker. And that's why I think that now initiative moved to our hands. Not totally, but moved. We are trying to move this war to the sky from the battlefield. That's why we now began to control the battlefield.

This is very important. It's difficult when you have less people to move them back, but we found another way how to do it, to cut their logistic for the army. It's about weapon, petrol, diesel, without basic human losses. That is the difference between us, by the way. Russia is, I mean, taking——

*President Trump.* He's got a lot of support. I just left the room with—you know, where they have, I mean, mostly European—you have Canada——

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes, yes.

*President Trump.* ——but mostly European countries. And they have a great support for——

*President Zelenskyy.* It's true.

*President Trump.* ——for Ukraine. And you know, really great support.

One of the things—you talk about questions for Putin, but one of the things that I've talked to him about was: "Where would you want to meet?" And he said, "Ideally, in Moscow." I said, "He's not going to meet in Moscow" —you know, it just doesn't work. You can't do that.

But he'll meet, and Zelenskyy is going to meet, and something's going to happen that's going to be positive. And I think—I hope it's going to happen soon, because they have to—number one, lives, but number two, building your country, because it's got a tremendous future, in my opinion.

Yes.

#### *Further Negotiations Between Russia and Ukraine*

*Q.* Where would it be held, and when would that happen?

*President Trump.* I don't know. I don't know.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

President Putin said, "I would love to meet in Moscow." And I said, "I don't think"—you know, I have to put myself in his position. I don't know that he'd go to Moscow. Maybe he would. Would you go to Moscow?

*President Zelenskyy.* It's difficult. There are lot of Ukrainian drones there—[inaudible].  
[Laughter]

Dangerous for me. It would be dangerous.

*President Trump.* That's right. He doesn't want to be hit by a drone. That's right.

*Q.* Budapest?

*President Zelenskyy.* Europe, United States.

*President Trump.* No, it's hard—would you—it's hard to go to Moscow. It's a little hard to.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

I thought—I thought I'd answer that question for him. I didn't want to—I didn't want to ask him that question.

#### *Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance*

*Q.* How would you ensure that Ukraine will not be attacked again by Russia?

*President Trump.* What about?

*Q.* How to make sure that Ukraine will not be attacked by Russia again?

*President Trump.* Well, look—you mean in the future?

*Q.* Yes.

*President Trump.* You mean after there's an agreement? Well, we're going to work on a security guarantee that—and Russia respects us a lot. And we're going to work on some kind of a security—if we can make the right deal, we'll help Europe. I mean, Europe is going to be watching it, but we're going to be helping them, and we'll work on some kind of a security package that will make sure.

I don't think that's going to happen. I think that if we make a deal, Russia is going to be very happy, and they're going to get on with other things.

They have—by the way, as a country too, they have tremendous potential. They have tremendous land, valuable land that they can do things with. And they have tremendous potential.

But I don't think it's going to happen. I don't see—that question is, "Oh, they're going to attack again." I don't see it at all. I think they've had it. They've had—this has been going on for 5—almost 5 years. Right?

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Who would have thought?

*President Zelenskyy.* Too long.

*President Trump.* I mean, it's a tribute, because it's a bigger country, strong country. And it's an amazing tribute.

Anything else?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

#### *U.S. Patriot Missiles*

*Q.* President Zelenskyy has said that Ukraine needs Patriot missiles now. Over 50 Ukrainians have died in recent airstrikes, just in the last few days. So, in addition to these production licenses, which will take time, would you consider providing——

*President Trump.* Not that much time, actually.

*Q.* Would you consider providing any to Ukraine immediately?

*President Trump.* We have Patriots, but we don't have that many. We need them for ourselves too. You know? Some—yes, I mean, some, but I think they can produce them pretty quickly.

Once we explain it—we'll bring the company here. You'll work with the company. They have a great ability to produce weapons—pretty complex weapons.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Possible Visit by President Trump to Ukraine*

*Q.* Will you—will you go to Ukraine?

*President Trump.* Go ahead.

Will I go to Ukraine?

*Q.* Will you go to Ukraine?

*President Trump.* I would, yes. When it's over.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

I'd rather have the war be over. [Laughter]*Q.* Do you have any deadline?

*President Trump.* I'm sure Secret Service would be thrilled—[laughter]—right now. But you know what? I would.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

I would like to go. I think it's—I think the people are incredible.

And I mean, like, Kyiv—it would be nice to get it before any more damage is done, to be honest. It's such a beautiful city, right? And yes, I would go to Ukraine at the right time.

*Ukraine/Russia/President Trump's Foreign Policy*

*Q.* Do you have any deadline when you want to reach a deal between Ukraine and Russia? Do you have any deadline in that regard?

*President Trump.* No, I don't have a dead—you can't have a deadline. It's—you know, it's too much going on. But I think you're going to have a deal. I think, you know, I've been—I've been very good.

You know, we had certain deals, like Azerbaijan and some of the deals that we made. And they—they've been going on for 32 years. And they said, "It's an impossible thing to get them solved." Eight different deals.

Even in the Congo, it was—think of it. You have the Congo and Rwanda. That was 14 million people dead, a lot of them with machetes. It's a horrible—we got that one solved. Or, you know, they go—they—it flares up every once in a while, I must say.

But we got deals done that weren't doable. But if you look at—well, India and Pakistan. They were at it. We got that. I—we get them done. And when we get them done, I find that people are not anxious to go back into it. I think we'll have—you once mentioned the word "security guarantee" in the Oval Office, right?

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* And you know, I think they're going to need some kind of a security guarantee.

*President Zelenskyy.* Very.

*President Trump.* But we're going to work with them. That's important.

*President Zelenskyy.* It's very important.

*President Trump.* I think he thinks that's a very important thing, yes.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes, the security guarantees are very important. And——

*President Trump.* And they'll live by it.

*President Zelenskyy.* —and, partially, President said about Patriots and licenses. The Patriot system is the best, you know, in the world, for today—the best anti-ballistic system. So, we used a lot of——

*President Trump.* That's the best.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes, they're the best one. And we—was—I mean, checked everything during the war. So this is true. So, with all respect to other partners, we are thankful for all the systems. Patriots are——

*President Trump.* Well, they had different systems in Venezuela.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* So Venezuela had systems that didn't work.

We didn't have one plane shot down. We didn't have one—we had one helicopter operator who was incredible. He landed perfectly, and his leg was almost blown off. And we gave him the congressional Medal of Honor, because very few people could have landed that. You know, you land them with your feet, really—more than anything else. And he landed it. And he was really in bad shape. And at the State of the Union, we gave him—he was a handsome guy—big, handsome guy. But we gave him the congressional Medal of Honor at the State of the Union.

So, look, he wants to get it done, and we're going to get it done.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

### *Ukrainian Drone Technology*

*Q.* What's the status on a drone deal between Ukraine and the U.S.?

*President Trump.* On what status?

*Q.* What's the status of a drone deal between Ukraine and the U.S.?

*President Trump.* Well, we would buy their drones. And we make drones. We make great drones. But they have an ability to make a lot of them, which is—right, Marco?—amazing that in a war situation they make them. They make them in basements. They make them wherever the hell you have a little shelter—even if you don't have shelter, I think, I suspect, right? It's an amazing ability. Very few—well, that's why I say with the—with the Patriots they—they would be able to do it. Most countries would not be able—they don't have the talent. You have very talented people.

So, yes, I think we're going to make that deal.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

And you know, if we made that deal, he'd have great protection. I love the protection. I think if you had a lot of Patriots, you wouldn't—you'd never be hit.

*President Zelenskyy.* Yes.

*President Trump.* And—as an example, in Kyiv, where the—where they get hit with missiles, those missiles—like what I said about the *Abraham Lincoln*—the missiles would be shut down, you know? So—and I think you'd start making it pretty quickly, right?

*President Zelenskyy.* Of course.

*President Trump.* You like the idea?

*President Zelenskyy.* No, no, it's a great idea.

*President Trump.* I think everybody likes that one.

*President Zelenskyy.* We need it.

*President Trump.* Yes.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

#### *Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance*

*Q.* As part of security guarantees, are you ready to close the skies in case Russia attacks again?

*President Trump.* To close what?

*Q.* To close the skies over Ukraine in case Russia——

*President Trump.* What?

*Secretary Rubio.* Close the skies. Air defense.

*Q.* As a part of security guarantees——

*President Zelenskyy.* It's been—that—air defense and jets.

*Q.* Are you——

*President Zelenskyy.* Will you use jets?

*Q.* Are you willing to impose the no-flight zone?

*President Trump.* If it's necessary, yes. I mean, I—look, I tell you, when we have a deal—we're going to have a deal, security guarantee or no security guarantee.

If we have a deal, we're going to have a deal. We're not going to have to worry about what you're saying. We're going to have a deal. I think if we come to a solution, which I think we will, we're going to have a deal.

Now, we want to make sure the deal sticks. Some people don't think it will. I think it will. I think if—I'm sure it will.

I'm not sure it will with Iran. If we make a deal with Iran, I'm not sure that will stick.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Because I found them to be very dishonorable people.

Yes.

#### *Russia/Iran*

*Q.* Are you going to reimpose the NATO blockade?

*President Trump.* I don't find that with him, and, I mean, I don't want to upset him, but—everything I've done with President Putin has been okay. It's been good.

He's going to say "Oh, that"—but you know, I wouldn't expect you to say that. But that's good. I don't think anything is going to be broken. And we're going to do a security guarantee in case it is.

But with Iran—47 years—this should have been done by another President a long time ago—or somebody else, another country. But they got stronger and stronger, and now they're weak.

### *U.S. Military Operations in Iran/Drug Interdiction Efforts*

*Q.* Are you going to reimpose the naval blockade on Iranian ports?

*President Trump.* You know, don't forget, we knocked out 159 ships in one week. That's good, even for you, right? Hundred and fifty-nine. Their entire navy is at the bottom of the sea. And now they have little boats—little tiny boats that go around. And we knocked about 28 of them out last night with the same—the same weapon we use for the drug people.

You know, drugs are down, by the way—drugs by sea are down 97 percent, meaning nobody wants to get into those boats and take drugs into—they're down 97 percent. And we're using the same thing for the mine boats.

You know, they have—they like to drop mines in, and we hit a lot of them last night—like 28. We knocked out 28 boats last night. Little ones. That's all they have is little ones.

*Q.* Are you going to try to take out more tonight?

*President Trump.* Will we go tonight? You know, normally I wouldn't tell you. I wouldn't tell you. But you know what? There's not a thing they can do about it. So the answer is probably.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

He's going to say that's terrible military strategy—"He just said he's going to the"—yes. Because they deserve it. They deserve it.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Daniel.

### *U.S. Military Operations in Iran/U.S. Drug Interdiction Efforts in the Caribbean Sea*

*Q.* President Trump. President Trump. What is the effectiveness of last night's attack? What message does that send to what's left of the Iranian—*[inaudible]*?

*President Trump.* Which attack are you talking about?

*Q.* The attack that you guys had on Iran last night. The strikes last night, sir.

*President Trump.* Oh, I think it has a tremendous impact. Well, first of all, we took out additional—you know, they were trying to rebuild their radar, and they had about 60 percent built. Now they have to start all over again.

Look, we're not attacking at the highest level. The highest level—the bridges, they're—which we can knock down—I would say in 1 day we'd knock down every single bridge in Iran. There's not a thing they can do about it.

Their electric manufacturing facilities—right?—their electric plants, where they make their electricity and their—we will—if we have to, we'll take them out. I don't want to do that. But if we have to, we'll take them out.

They have desalinization plants. We'll take them out if we have to. I hate to do that. That's probably the one I would like not to do least.

We attacked Kharg Island last night. We knocked out a piece. I said, "Don't touch the oil," because maybe we'll take over Kharg Island. You know, we may take over Kharg Island. There's not a thing they can do about it. But I said: "Don't hit the pipes. Just hit everything else." And they hit it. They may hit it again tonight. So, you know, as for your question, normally I'm not that way. But they really deserve it, because they're saying they want to make a deal, but they don't.

You know, they asked for a time-out. They wanted to go to the funeral of Khamenei. And I said, "Give it to them." And they start shooting missiles. I mean, it's the crazier thing.

Now, we did kill him, you know. *[Laughter]* So, I guess you have to look at it that way. But the funeral took place, and they wanted to have a period of time. And they also asked that we not kill them. And we said, "We're not going to kill you." They were worried we'd kill them during the funeral, I mean, if you can believe it. What a crazy—

Did you ever think I'd be doing this for a living, Marco? Did anybody ever think I'm doing—maybe Pete. But this wasn't supposed to be for me. *[Laughter]* Pete—Pete loved this stuff from day one.

But they said to us, "Please don't kill us during the funeral." I said, "I won't." And we didn't. And we didn't do anything. In fact, we made it safe for them, actually. And what happens? They try and knock out two ships. A Saudi and, I guess, Kuwait, right? Kuwaiti. Oh, no. Qatari, in addition. Really, three.

*U.S. Secretary of War Peter B. Hegseth.* Three. Yes, sir.

*President Trump.* So you had three of them. And they're just—I don't know. I just don't know with them. A lot of people say they—they're very dishonorable people and they can't keep a deal. So we'll see.

Now, as to whether or not Steve Witkoff, Jared, and J.D. and everybody working on that will talk—I guess they could talk, but I'm not seeing it with them. I—you know, with the people. My whole life is deals. I don't see it. I don't see it with them.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

And there may be a big attack tonight, and it will knock out a lot of stuff. We don't knock out nothing. We knock out a lot.

Pete, do you want to tell them about last night?

*Secretary Hegseth.* Yes, sir. Last night, as you said, a lot of small craft that they were trying to harass shipping with. So that was a big part of what we targeted. Underground facilities where they were storing drones or missiles; coastal defense sites; radar sites; surveillance sites; anything used to harass shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

So anything they thought they had rebuilt or capability they were using was a target last night. And tonight, if we need to, on your order, Mr. President, we will hit even more and even deeper, because that's the consequence.

*President Trump.* And we may put down the blockade. We may put it back—the blockade. And it will only be a blockade for Iran. Anybody else can have whatever they want.

Now, of course, they'll drop some mines if they can. You know, if they can do it. But it's hard because we're taking out those little boats now with the same weapon we used to take out the drug lords and the boats coming in by sea.

Think of it. Ninety-seven percent. For years, we had fentanyl and all the other drugs coming in from different countries, including Venezuela. And it was—you know, they'd arrest them, they'd bring them to a court, they'd be released, and they'd be back on another boat the next—97 percent. It had—it—what was done in the past had no impact. Ninety-seven percent, drugs down coming in by sea. And now we're going to start doing it by land. The land is easier, but we had to do sea first.



And nobody—I mean, I think the 3 percent of the people that still do that—I think they're the bravest people in the world. They—maybe we should probably give them a medal for bravery, because it's—

And we're using the same exact missile to take out the mine—the mine drop—they call them "mine droppers." But we had minesweepers.

And one of the things that came up today is that European nations—the NATO group—they're sending minesweepers. We don't need them now. We have pretty much—the mines are cleared up.

But they'll probably drop some more. They're evil people. They're sick people. They're really—they're mentally disturbed people. And it should have been done 47 years ago.

Thank you, everybody, very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. at the Beştepe Presidential Compound. In his remarks, he referred to President Karol Nawrocki of Poland; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions Steven C. Witkoff; Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Slover, USA, who was wounded in the January 3 U.S. military operation in Venezuela to exfiltrate former President Nicolás Maduro Moros of Venezuela to the U.S.; and Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance. He also referred to his son-in-law, U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Jared C. Kushner.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Ankara, Turkey; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Ukraine, President Zelenskyy.

*Locations:* Ankara, Turkey.

*Names:* Bessent, Scott K.H.; Erdogan, Recep Tayyip; Hegseth, Peter B.; Kushner, Jared C.; Nawrocki, Karol; Obama, Barack; Palisa, Pavlo; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Slover, Eric; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Witkoff, Steven C.; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

*Subjects:* Illegal drugs, interdiction efforts; Iran, cease-fire agreement with U.S.; Iran, commercial transit through Strait of Hormuz; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, human rights issues; Iran, nuclear weapons program; Iran, oil supply and refining; Iran, regional involvement; Iran, U.S. military operations; Medal of Honor; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Poland, President; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of War; Suspected drug-trafficking vessels, U.S. airstrikes in Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific; Turkey, President; Turkey, President Trump's visit; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. military readiness, improvement efforts; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions; Ukraine, critical minerals supply; Ukraine, drone technology; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Venezuela, U.S. military capture and exfiltration of President Maduro; Vice President.

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